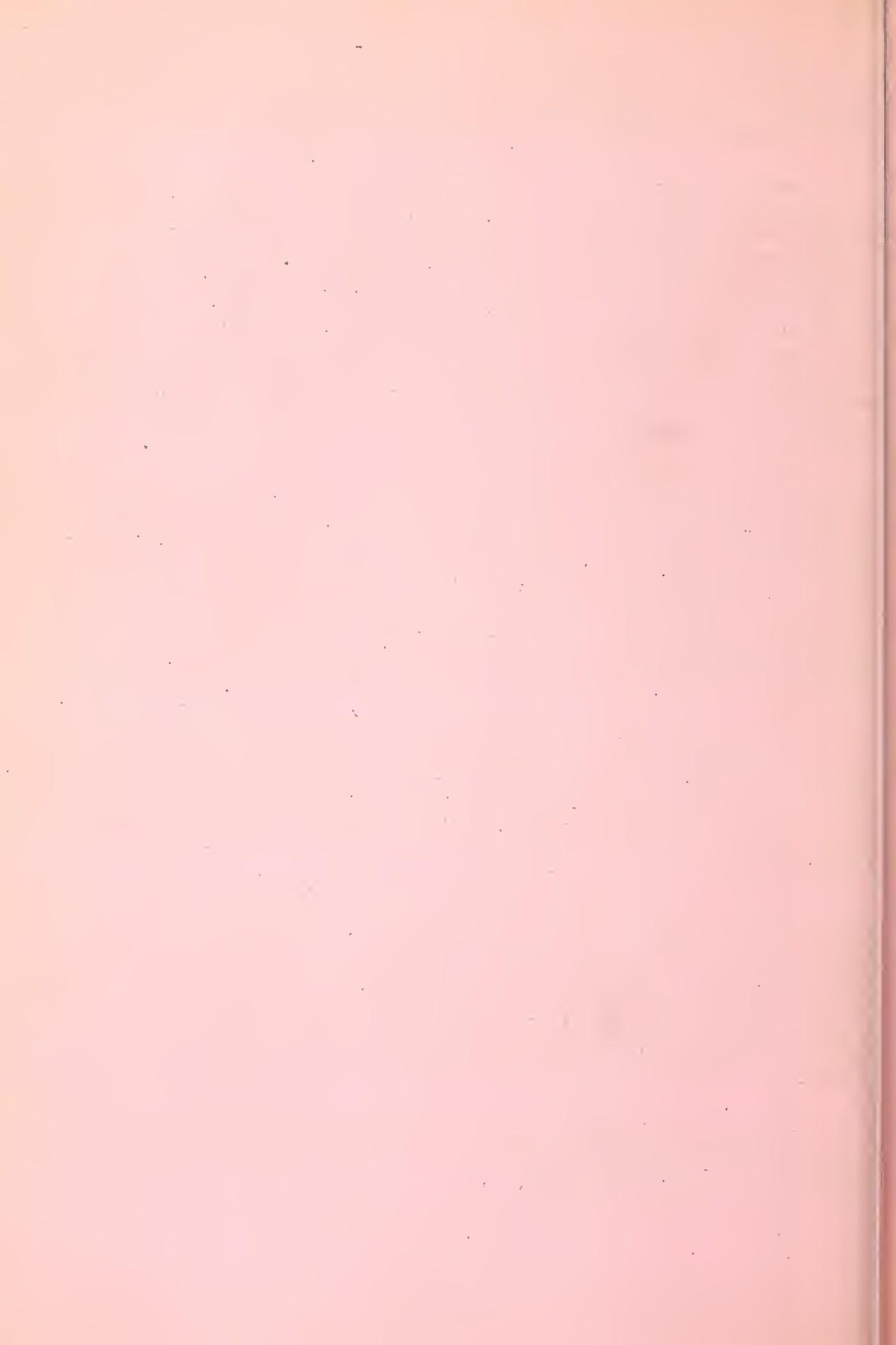


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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Friday, June 21, 1935.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "Quick Tricks With Biscuits." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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The bugbear of monotony is likely to bother even the best of meal-planners now and then. You know those tiresome days when you rack your brains to think of something for dinner beside the same old stew, the same old vegetables, the same old biscuits -- but there. Let's stop with biscuits. The cookery people at the Bureau of Home Economics have given me some new ideas about biscuits, and I'd like to pass them along to you.

The simple familiar mixture that goes by the name of baking powder biscuits -- flour and fat, baking powder, salt and liquid -- well, that's one of the items that can be the same old monotonous hot bread day in and day out, or can be different every day in the year. From all these cooking people tell me, I gather that these biscuits really should be called three-hundred-and-sixty-five-way biscuits. There are at least that many ways of varying them.

You can make these biscuits in different sizes and shapes depending on the way you want to serve them. And you can add different ingredients to your standard recipe to give them a different taste or a different look.

I'm not going to give you any recipes today. Almost every good cook has a dependable recipe for baking powder biscuit that she uses regularly. But what I want to tell you is some of the quick tricks you can use to vary that recipe you have.

First, some ideas about size. If you cut your biscuits large and serve them piping hot with meat and gravy, or with creamed meat, fish or vegetables, they'll provide you with a good main course for a meal. Or, you can use those large biscuits to make a meat pie. Just bake them on top of a casserole of stew or of meat and gravy. There's the original meat pie with a biscuit crust. Large biscuits are also the ones to use for shortcake -- strawberry or raspberry or any other fruit you like. (We'll have more to say about shortcake later.)

Medium-size biscuits are our good old hot regulars that we eat with butter at the first part of the meal, or with jelly or jam, marmalade or honey or maple sirup for dessert.

As for tiny biscuits -- those you cut out with your smallest cutter -- they're the dainty little ones for afternoon tea.

So much for size. Now about ingredients -- ways to change ingredients. Which brings us back to shortcake mixtures. Genuinely shortcake is "short" -- that is, it contains more shortening than plain biscuits. So when you make

a dough for strawberry shortcake, you'll add more fat to the mixture and probably a little sugar. Or you can make the mixture "short" by adding sweet cream instead of milk.

Most people use milk as the liquid in baking powder biscuits, but if you happen to be out of milk, you can use water. Not so much nourishment in biscuits made with water, of course, and not quite the same flavor, but they can be just as light and just as good looking. You can also use tomato juice in place of milk for a faintly pink biscuit, or you can use orange juice. If you happen to have one or two egg yolks left in your refrigerator, you can use them for biscuits with a delicate yellow color. When you add egg yolks, use less milk in your mixture.

Or again, suppose you have some sour milk or buttermilk on hand. You can substitute that for sweet milk if you also use soda and cut down on the amount of baking powder. Some people prefer the flavor of sour-milk biscuits.

Suppose you need to make biscuits in a hurry. Here's the time when you can save on rolling and cutting out by adding enough liquis to give you a soft dough. Drop this hurry-up mixture onto your greased tin or in muffin pans and bake.

Now for a few other new ideas in flavor. Cheese biscuits are good ones for salad or afternoon tea. They're quick and easy to make. Just add some grated snappy cheese to your biscuit mixture in place of some of the fat called for. Cut these biscuits very small and serve them piping hot. Do the youngsters in your family like peanut butter? Here's another good biscuit idea. Use peanut butter for part of the fat called for in your standard recipe.

Most men are enthusiastic about both cheese and peanut butter biscuits. They also like "stuffed" or "surprise" biscuits. Make these with a soft biscuit dough in muffin tins. Drop a little dough into greased muffin tins. In the center of each place a bit of soft grated cheese seasoned with cayenne, or a teaspoon of chopped ham. Cover with more dough and bake.

But you can make good ham or bacon biscuits in an easier way than this. Just add some finely chopped cooked ham or some chopped cooked bacon as you mix up your biscuits.

And that reminds me. Picnic season is here and it's high time I told you about some of the best biscuits to go into your picnic basket. A friend of mine makes pinwheel biscuits that beat any ham sandwich I ever tasted. She rolls out the biscuit dough on the board, brushes it with butter, then spreads it with chopped or deviled ham. Then she rolls up that stretch of dough carefully and evenly, and cuts it in slices about an inch thick. These slices she bakes cut-side up. They're different looking and very delicious.

This rolled-up-and-sliced idea you can use for sweet biscuits, too. You can use it to make quick cinnamon rolls by sprinkling on cinnamon and sugar and maybe chopped raisins. Or, you can spread your dough with butter and marmalade before you roll it. Or you can use honey or jam. Just remember one baking rule here. Since sweet biscuits are likely to scorch, reduce the heat of your oven for them.

Well, that's just a start on tricks with biscuits. But maybe it will give you an idea or two for one of thos' days when you want something different.

